

Cooperative Agreement No. 388-A-00-97-00013-00  
Job Opportunities and Business Support (JOBS) Project

*Submitted to:*  
**USAID/Bangladesh**

Submitted by:  
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In reference to the letter of USAID “Cooperative Agreement No. 388-A-00-97-00013-00, Job Opportunities and Business Support (JOBS)” of May 12, 2005, and in order to achieve a proper closeout the following information is provided against the serial numbers 1-3 of the letter.

**1. A summary report on technical assistance activities during FY 2005 including ongoing ones.**

During the reporting period October 2004 – September 2005, the JOBS Project has continued providing skill enhancement training, export and marketing facilitation, and financial intermediation for small enterprises in Bangladesh. The attached Project Performance Monitoring Indicators and Procurement Action Plan (PAP) offer the numerical breakdown of the Project’s achievements. It is useful to note that JOBS-assisted enterprises recorded more

than \$28 million in annual sales, thereby exceeding the target by \$2.5 million. JOBS also facilitated the formation of 10 clusters followed by production oriented training for 489 grassroots workers in the footwear, home textile, handmade paper, and personal protective equipment (PPE) sectors. Moreover, during the year 7 more events such as Entrepreneurship Development and Business Management (EDBM) and CBI training courses were organized with 191 participants from different private sectors, NGOs and Business Supported Organizations (BSOs).

**2. A summary report on assistance programs to Chambers and Associations undertaken during FY 2005**

▪ **Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BWCCI)**

In order to create a wider export market for women entrepreneurs, JOBS trained 30 workers of 3 different members of Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BWCCI) on “**Quality, Design and Product Development on Home Textile Products**”. The participating enterprises developed 20 new products for their participation in the New York Home Textile Show in October 2004.

▪ **Chittagong Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCCI)**

JOBS developed a **website** ([www.chittagongchamber.com](http://www.chittagongchamber.com)) for Chittagong Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCCI) to facilitate the access of its members to information. It also created an **electronic data-base** for 5,000 registered members of CCCI in order to facilitate the members’ access to communication and international trade. During the year, JOBS organized mentoring workshops for board members to ensure Chamber functioned in a more responsive, transparent and democratic manner.

▪ **Training of Chambers (General)**

**Market Intel Workshop:** JOBS in collaboration with CBI, an organization of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, organized a training workshop in Dhaka on *Market Intel* (Market Intelligence) focusing on the management of market information systems of

Business Support Organizations (BSOs). The purpose of the workshop was to assist the participants of BSOs in the improvement or setting up of a Market Information System with practical information. 25 participants from different chambers and associations participated in the workshop. The key aspects of the workshop were to establish trade linkages between Bangladeshi enterprises and EU markets, and to establish linkages with export promotional bodies and export regulatory bodies to collect and disseminate information on trade, commerce and related matters.

***Interior Decoration and Design Workshop:*** JOBS, in collaboration with CBI, organized a training workshop on *Interior Decoration and Design* in Dhaka. The objective was to introduce selected companies to the areas of ‘Interior decoration and design’ for domestic furniture, household furnishing textiles, gifts and decorative articles. The focus of the workshop was on design and marketing aspects targeting the EU markets. 25 participants from several companies, all involved in design and production, participated in the workshop.

***Workshop on ‘Doing Business with the EU’:*** CBI, in collaboration with JOBS, is organizing a workshop on “*Doing Business with the EU*” in September 2005. The objective of the workshop is to support Bangladeshi enterprises in establishing sustainable business relationships with EU markets. The workshop will inform Bangladeshi enterprises in the areas of trade barriers, market research, market entry strategy, trade partner issues, risk management, costing and pricing, export market plan and effective use of promotional materials. The workshop will be attended by 30 leading companies that are already exporting to EU markets and officials from Business Support Organizations (BSO’s). Some potential exporters that have experience in doing business in international markets will also be invited to the workshop.

#### ▪ **Export Promotion Bureau (EPB)**

JOBS in association with Export Promotion Bureau (EPB), a wing of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of the Government of Bangladesh, has developed promotional materials to expand market parameters of Bangladeshi enterprises. JOBS extended its assistance in the form of stall reservation and guidance on stall decoration. JOBS also created and supplied printed brochures as promotional material to **29** member enterprises of EPB that participated in the SIAL Fair in Paris, the New York Home Textile Show and the Tendence Life Style Fair in Germany.

#### ▪ **Handmade Paper Association:**

Handmade paper is one of the leading sectors in Bangladesh. JOBS Project has developed a business association with 12 producer groups and developed a website for this association to facilitate their access to information and communication on international trade. In association with DTC, the technical institute supported by German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), JOBS provided training on design and quality improvement and export market development to the membership of this association. With this experience, the participating entrepreneurs developed products for EU markets according to buyer’s specifications. JOBS Project also facilitated 3 of the entrepreneurs of this association to participate in the Paper World Fair in Germany.

▪ **Modhupur Pineapple Association:**

Modhupur Pineapple Association was formed in 2000. The assistance of JOBS project has facilitated the association in getting finance from Social Investment Bank Limited (SIBL) for the last 6 years. In 2004-2005, it received its 5<sup>th</sup> term finance amounting to Tk. 2,000,000 (US \$ 3,448) to run their business more efficiently. Due to the flooding situation during this period, the Association members were having difficulty in meeting their obligations per the loan payments and JOBS was asked by SIBL to intervene and attempt to work out a compromise position for both the membership and the bank.

**3. A summary report on status of various initiatives under ICT**

▪ **E-Governance – IT Act:**

Over the preceding two years, JOBS has worked closely with Minister Khan to create a final draft of the IT Act to be presented to the Cabinet. FY 2005 saw several days spent with the Minister of Science and ICT during which the act was completely re-drafted and vetted, line by line, culminating in **passage of the IT Act by the Cabinet on 14 February 2005.**

▪ **E-Commerce – IT Business Linkage Program:**

In collaboration with the Enterprise Development Team of USAID, JOBS has undertaken a business development and linkage program for a number of carefully selected, private, information technology (IT) companies in Bangladesh. Round I was successfully implemented in FY 2004, and FY 2005 saw the **implementation of a follow-on Round II.**

Phase 1 – Selection Process, October 2004

- Organized distribution of company surveys through the three industry associations, BASIS, BCS and ISPAB
- Arranged and staffed two day intensive seminar on developing relationships within the US ICT market, led by Abishek Jain of Washington Partners Ltd.
- Provided staff and logistics support as well as office space for four days of one-on-one company coaching sessions/interviews between Mr. Jain and 30 pre-selected (through the survey process) Bangladeshi ICT companies

Phase 2 – Training and Tour, February 2005

- Provided interface between the nine (9) companies selected and Mr. Jain for preparation for participation in the cap-stone US tour
- Acted as motivator and facilitator for the three (3) month training period prior to the US tour, pushing timely and thoughtful completion of training assignments
- Attended US Tour as on-site support and guidance for Bangladeshi companies as they made their introductions to the US market and participated in three group networking receptions and three private meetings per company

Follow-up – Lessons Learned

- Three of the selected companies declined the opportunity to participate in the tour at the last moment. This led JOBS to introduce the idea of setting a fee for the pre-tour

training and the tour itself, should any subsequent rounds of the program be implemented. The intention being to gain some level of financial commitment to match the effort being undertaken on behalf of these companies in setting up appointments and scheduling events for them while in the US.

▪ **E-Human Resources Development – Cisco Networking Academy Program (CNAP):**

CNAP is a comprehensive program designed to teach students Internet technology skills offering ten (9) curricula covering everything from Networking to Cabling to Security, all structured as preparatory study for internationally recognized certifications. Currently operating in over 150 countries and with over 400,000 students, CNAP came to Bangladesh in 2000 under the Least Developed Countries Initiative, offering the Cisco Certified Networking Associate (CCNA) curriculum.

The program was slow to develop in Bangladesh and JOBS joined the effort in 2003, taking over the role of Country Coordinator for the national program. Over the course of JOBS involvement the Bangladesh program became the **fastest growing program in the region**. It became clear that though there was immense potential for the program in Bangladesh, in order to tap into that potential a carefully constructed and comprehensive approach must be adopted. Building on the successes to date, FY 2005 activities targeted the identification of curricula, Academies, and partners for future growth, **implementing the initial stages of an ambitious expansion proposal** drafted at the beginning of the year.

*CCNA* – Equivalent to 280 hours of instruction, providing students with a basic foundation in the design, installation and maintenance of local and wide-area networks (LAN and WAN) networks.

- 10 Academies, 700 + students enrolled, 300 + graduates
- Second batch of Instructor training at the current CCNA Regional Academy underway
- Initiated steps to secure additional Cisco Certified Networking Associate (CCNA) Regional Academy
- Continued to support the Women in Technology scholarship program, with the first classes graduating in July 2005
- Awarding of upgrade bundles funded by Cisco (\$10,000 value) to the six highest performing Academies. Event held in partnership with AIUB at their facilities
- Receipt of equipment bundles donated by Cisco (\$75,000 value) for three new Academies to be registered - Mohila Polytechnic, Notre Dame, TBD
- Discussions with Bangladesh Public Administration Training Center (BPATC) to launch CCNA for IT administrators in government

*Hewlett Packard IT Essentials I and II (ITE)* – Two, 70-hour courses, the first of which focuses on PC hardware and software while the second offers an intensive introduction to multi-user, multi-tasking network operating systems, including characteristics of Linux.

- Introduction of new ITE curriculum in two Academies, AIUB and Shahjalal, and formal launch of curriculum in partnership with AIUB
- Facilitated training of instructors in India for two Bangladeshi ITE Academies

- Working with AIUB to attain Regional Academy status for ITE curriculum in Bangladesh
- Discussions with BPATC to incorporate ITE into required training for new-entry bureaucrats in Savar center, plus five satellite centers
- Discussions with Ministry of Education to implement ITE in all 21 existing Polytechnics, starting with a pilot of five (5)

*Cisco Certified Networking Professional (CCNP)* - 280 hours of instruction on complex network configurations and how to diagnose and troubleshoot network problems.

- Assessment and registration of CCNP candidate, AIUB
- Received \$80,000 private donation, via Cisco, for implementation process and equipment for first CCNP in region

### *Special Projects*

- Carried out Impact Assessment of the Gender Initiative activities in CNAP for Cisco Learning Institute – 82 interviews over the course of two weeks; received commendations from both CNAP colleagues and researchers assembling final report of 10 country analyses
- Extensive partnership building efforts to establish the relationships to carry the expansion plan over next four years - private sector ICT businesses and associations, US Peace Corps, Family Health International, UNDP, Relief International – Schools On-line, JICA, Sun Microsystems, International Computer Driver's License Foundation, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Science and ICT
- Completed initial assessments for a partnership implementation of RI-SOL program in pilot schools throughout a single Chittagong constituency, utilizing existing, donated, hardware as the foundation for development of a more advanced program that will introduce increased levels of IT education based on initial roll-out of RI-SOL programming.
- Hosted four Cisco delegations over the course of the year: Three with Elli Takagaki to assist in rationalizing, designing and marketing expansion program, consecutively; One with Rita Sully and Dan Myers to encourage ITE adoption, assess curriculum needs and initiate larger partnership between private sector, Academia and government in tackling issue of IT education quality and employment opportunity as expansion plan was introduced publicly for first time